

REMARKS

The Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for closely reviewing the claims and for indicating that claims 4-6 are allowed if rewritten in independent form. The Examiner has initially refused Claims 1-3 and 7-8 under 35 USC §102. Applicant submits that the amendments to independent Claim 1 and dependent Claim 7 distinguish Claims 1-3 and 7-8 from the prior art and Applicant's device is patentably distinct from the cited references. Accordingly, reconsideration is requested.

The PTO has issued a non-final rejection of Claims 1, 2, 7 and 8 as anticipated by Patent No. 1,512,981 to Gordon (the "Gordon Patent"). Applicant asserts that her invention is not anticipated by the Gordon Patent. The first portion of Applicant's invention has a work surface which allows the user to wash and treat the contact lenses. In order to give the user sufficient space to perform these tasks, the work space is relatively large, located forward of the unit's second storage portion when the case is open, and completely free of any vertically extending structures or any structures lying above its surface. In contrast, the work surface in the Gordon Patent has a shelf lying directly above it and has two side walls surrounding the surface. The Gordon Patent's work space is encumbered and it would be difficult or impossible for a user to efficiently wash and treat contact lenses thereon. Applicant has amended Claim 1 to further clarify this limitation on Applicant's invention.

Furthermore, Applicant's invention includes a central storage area that is amply sized in order to allow for the storage of ancillary equipment such as distilled water or lens cleaning solution as well as eyeglasses and a lens carrying case. In contrast, the

Gordon Patent's central storage area consists of a hexagonal shaped depression. The central storage structure is incapable of providing the storage capacity that the Applicant's central storage area provides. Applicant has amended Claim 1 to further clarify this limitation on Applicant's invention.

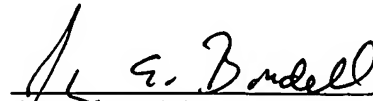
Additionally, the eyeglass storage loop in the Applicant's invention provides a support on which a pair of eyeglasses may be hung. In contrast, the Gordon Patent's eyeglass storage loop consists of a recess. This recess is unable to support a pair of eyeglasses and allow them to be hung thereon. Applicant has amended Claim 7 to further clarify this limitation on Applicant's invention.

The PTO has issued a non-final rejection of Claims 1 and 3 as anticipated by Patent No. 1,767,567 to Weil (the "Weil Patent"). The central storage area in the Weil Patent consists of pan which provides a surface for various brushes to rest. This pan is flat and shallow as specifically taught by the Weil Patent in order to provide a compact make-up case. Col. 1, Lines 49-50. Unlike the Applicant's invention, the central storage area in the Weil Patent cannot hold a bottle of distilled water or lens cleaning solution by itself let alone in combination with a pair of eyeglasses and a lens carrying case. Furthermore, the central storage area in the Weil Patent is not in between the between the first and second storage areas as claimed in the Applicant's invention. Accordingly, Applicant's invention is not anticipated by the Weil Patent.

In summation, the cited references do not anticipate Applicant's invention and the Applicant's invention is patentably distinct from the prior art. In view of the foregoing arguments, the referenced independent claims and claims dependent thereon are

believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejections of the claims and pass this application to issue.

Respectfully submitted,

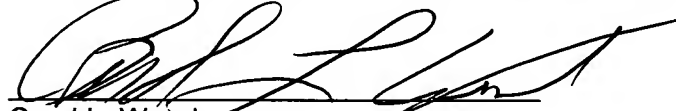


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